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# KING TOLSTOY'S SYMPHONY

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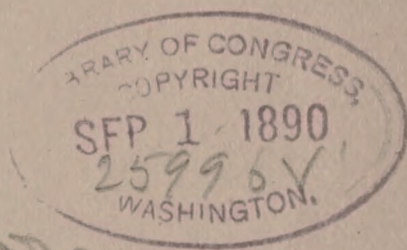
## AN ADAMLESS EVE

A COUNTERPART TO THE KREUTZER SONATA

By

H. B. S.

*H. B. Sommers*



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TO  
MY FRIEND AND PUPIL,  
RALPH SCHOOLFIELD GRACE,  
THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS HUMBLY DEDICATED  
BY  
THE AUTHOR.



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

I FORESEE scores of spicy criticisms. I expect them. That in itself ought to be my redeeming literary feature.

I have not attempted satire. I have been urged to write this counterpart to the "Kreutzer Sonata" by the timely warning given by some of our government officials, and I am sure it (I mean the book) will have a salutary effect upon the reading public.

It is intended as a serio-comical parody. Whenever you can't laugh, why just make up your mind that it is not funny; but before you throw it aside look at it again from the other side, and watch the change.

H. B. S.

LAKE VIEW, August 10, 1890.



# KING TOLSTOY'S SYMPHONY

OR

AN ADAMLESS EVE

## CHAPTER I.

Man was not created for the sake of matrimony, but matrimony was created for the sake of man.

Marriage is neither a prison nor a prisoner's chain, but it is a moral relation, an exchange of love and esteem.

SEVERAL young damsels, whose respective ages are best represented by the algebraical expression  $X^x$ , were comfortably seated in a semicircle on the poop of a deep-water vessel. Their conversations were at times low and inaudible; at times their voices were drowned by the seething of the waves and the flapping of the sails. Far away in the airy distance the faint contour of mountains was to be



seen, over which hovered shredded filaments of cirrus clouds.

The last rays of the dying sun were still faintly shining on the figure-head, when a deep contralto voice exclaimed:

“Dudidoff! rush the log-book along!”

The tone of the speaker plainly indicated that she possessed a right to command the one spoken to.

Presently, Dudidoff, attired in a close-fitting navy blue suit, came dawdling along, hugging a huge polyhedral book. Whether it was due to the sway of the ship or to the spanking “Noreaster” playing with the jibboom does not so much interest us, but the fact remains that the so-called log-book was very unsteady in the hands of Dudidoff. After considerable tacking she reached the center of the group in an exhausted and fairly demoralized condition. Again that same contralto voice, in crescendo tones, spliced with fortissimos, shouted:



“Trip aloft and keep a sharp lookout for shoals and shallow water!”

Simultaneously with this command they all arose save one. She was reclining on an outstretched steamer chair covered by a Smyrna rug. Her eyes were closed and inflamed; her features contorted as if she had been in the coma of a narcotic. Her complexion was sallow and olive; her hands thin and dainty. The noise, similar to the moving of a table at a séance, occasioned by the rising of her comrades evidently awoke her. She slowly opened her eyes, cast them skyward, and in a drawling voice enchantingly soliloquized:

“The polar star is at an angle of eighteen degrees, and are we no nearer ——— ———?”

She was interrupted by the hysterical quivering of a bell, accompanied with the tramping of feet going below.

All was still. A glowing disk of fire was now perceptible in the skies; a few



stars glittered in the firmament. There was no sign of life as far as the eye could reach except the form of two women on the deck of this vessel.

After stretching out one of her emaciated hands for a glass of lime juice, which she eagerly imbibed, she was seized with a terrific spell of coughing.

"And now," she said, addressing the one who had before given the orders, "I will relate to you what has prompted me to make this voyage. It is not a horrible tale, not a frightful story, but still the very thought of it unnerves me. I could never heretofore induce myself to let my lips unfold the hidden tale."

Her large, dark eyes flashed, her nose was drawn clear under her eyebrows, as she again was seized by a coughing spell.

"Sit close to me, so that you may hear it all! Oh, how many nights has that star yonder watched me bewailing my misery. Misery did I say, ah no, for where there is love, misery liveth not."



She again sipped at her glass, and with a heavy effort straightened herself into a sitting posture, and again resumed:

“For you to get a thorough idea of my life, I will begin at the start and finish at the end; ah yes, for the end is close at hand — How many miles have we still to make?”

She continued without awaiting a reply.

“Why and wherefore I was born I know not, and why I have lived thus only the gods can tell — but do you know, I am a wreck; nobody wants to earn the salvage, consequently I am doomed.” The sad expression which had thus far covered her face suddenly disappeared, to be lit up by a smile.

“But to go back still further — Before I was born my father was captain of a steamer, and I remember being told that sometimes he would force other captains to surrender their cargo to him, and sometimes he would trade off his ballast for their slaves. This was usually done at



sea, so — Ah ! but even if it were not so I could not have been otherwise, for it was not to be. My life then started on the water — oh, how I love the water; oh, how I cling to the place of my birth —”

She now burst into tears, and so ringing her hands above her head she bemoaningly, and intermingled with weeping, cried aloud. After several moments of silence she continued.

“ Shortly before my father's demise he told me who my mother had been and how she came to be his wife — but I was too young to either understand or appreciate it.

“ My father was shipwrecked off an island in the Pacific Ocean, and, of the entire crew, nobody was saved but a little girl about twelve years of age. That was I. The island belonged to a king, called Tolstoy, and he was the sole and only Tolstoy on Jusanoff Island; why should I relate to you how I spent my girlhood days — or how happy I felt for



many, many years ! It is not part of my story. Suffice to say I first fell —”

“Fell ?” interrupted the listener in amasement.

“Yes ! I first fell in love at a garden party held in honor of the king's brother-in-law. Those times were very trying; for hours I would sit on the beach, thinking of the watery grave my poor father was in, and, whilst *thus sitting*, a picture of *him* would rise up before me. I tried every means to wean myself away from his affection; I toiled with laborious efforts to loosen myself from the yoke. I strove to disentangle myself from these fetters, but all to no use; I was under their ban. He lived with me in every thought, in every —”

Before she could finish the sentence, the tinkling of the bell was again heard.

The relieving watch came on deck ; the retiring watch went below. Side-lights out! red light on starboard quarter! was the order given. Then all hands joined



in the retiring salvo: "Bye, bye Miss!" The contralto voice again resounded through the chaotic stillness, and the possessor thereof re-occupied the seat opposite Pontypoff, who now continued: "You, Slippysoff, are acquainted with the earlier history of my life, but you cannot conceive it unless I rehearse to you the causes that led to it. For the causes are more terrible, if terrible it can be called, than the end. Oh! I feel as if a cold wave were passing over me when I recall the details of *his* devotion. At first it amused me, then pleased me, then I longed for it, and finally it became a necessity to my existence. I remember that I once remained for hours in a dark room, in sheer misery, because he had disappointed me. And how he loved me! I have never spoken about his love. I never breathed it to anyone, but I feel urged to now give vent to my pent-up feelings. Do you know what love is? Ah! love is a great thing, a sublime



feeling, an exalted sentiment. It elevates the mind, the soul; urges one to nobler motives, nobler deeds. I can still see him before me on that morning."

Suddenly the vessel gave a terrific lurch leeward, and Pontypoff paused for some moments.

"Oh! I quite forgot what I was going to tell you."

"You spoke of that morning," said Slippysoff.

"Yes! He came to woo me. I had for some time noticed that he was deeply in love. He was growing thinner day by day; love was consuming him. Even the doctor said, 'King Tolstoy is in love—' But, to go back to a period more interesting; do you know what preludes love, dear Slippysoff?"

"No, dear Pontypoff, I was never in love."

"Then it will be difficult for you to understand my story, for those who have never experienced it, and I dare say



there are some, among the wild tribes of Africa, who can not realize what effect it has upon the soul.

“What preludes love? It is a sort of inward passion that burns like the rays of the equatorial sun, and to the world presents itself as the sacred courtship. My courtship lasted for many years. It was like a perennial honeymoon. Each year, when the flowers bloomed afresh, King Tolstoy was wont to send me a selected bouquet of alfalfa grass and new-mown hay. What a token of devotion! After several years I became accustomed to this gift, and discounted it, for, dear Slippysoff, otherwise it would have been detrimental to my nervous system.

“Yes, nervous prostration — that is another symptom of love. It is a legitimate function, at times not beneficial to the health. Those fainting spells and neuralgic headaches are obligatory in the first stages of love. Whenever I suffered with attacks of *migrane*, the court phy-



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sician attended me. Ah! this physician, how many times he was my savior! I do believe that disease could be entirely extirpated if patients would only follow one-tenth of the advice given by these pontiffs of science. If venesection could be practiced on the heart, then, the blood thereof infused into the heart of another, cardiac diseases might be unknown. But I am again straying from my subject. I felt the necessity of his courtship, of his attentions, and year after year it became more of a boon. How different if he had been a literary artist! He might have written sonnets and chants, adored me in verse and in rhyme. But it was not to be———”

At that moment a gust of wind rent the gaff-topsail, and plunged them in total darkness by extinguishing the side-lights.



## CHAPTER II.

“Man is dear to man; the poorest poor  
Long for some moments in a weary life  
When they can know and feel that they have been  
Themselves the fathers and the dealers-out  
Of some small blessings; have been kind to  
Such as needed kindness, for this single cause  
That we have all of us one human heart.”

TOTAL darkness still reigned.

To be loved was to be happy, and no one can be happy without receiving or delivering love. Such were the thoughts that flashed through her brain. To poor Slippysoff now lying outstretched at her feet she was about to continue telling the story of her life — the romance of her love, when Slippysoff said:

“Will you impart to me the entire story of your love affair?”

“Yes, child,” was the answer. “It will give me pleasure to inveigle you into a similar confession, but even if I do not



succeed, I will proceed; and she then started relating.

“When I was eight years old, and one day reading a story about John the Sunday-school teacher, a gentleman approached me. He was not goodlooking, but very homely — his hair was not curly for he wore a wig. This is the epoch from which my life's story really starts. In a very gentlemanly way he bowed to me, and asked me if my father was at home. Of course the mention of my father's name brought the tears to my eyes. I told him that my father was dead. He seemed very melancholy and sad to receive such information, but his deep sorrow was not betrayed by any other visible sign. He spoke to me so friendly, so paternally that I could not help but like him, notwithstanding his homely visage.

“Oh, Slippysoff, believe me, I then loved him — loved him in a childish, naive way — yes, that was the first sign of an in-



nocent, girlish love. His dress was repulsive; he did not wear any Prince Albert coat and high hat, no white linen shirt, or standing up collar, but still I loved him. Do you know, ever since I have often thought why are not just such love reminiscences written about in novels, instead of the rude things they say about the heroes and heroines. Why, I read a book where a man kills his wife, it is the most shocking thing out.

“Then I did not see him again for almost a year. I had just gone in bathing with my governess, when we saw him standing on the beach picking up shells. When he saw we wanted to go into our bath-houses, he retired. A little later he returned, and presented me with a basket of oysters. Do you know, Slippysoff, I felt an irresistible feeling as if I wished to give him a kiss—he was so good to me, so attentive. When he left me that day I thought a great deal more of him, and for a long time thereafter I con-



stantly asked myself why I liked King Tolstoy so much. He was certainly not handsome, nor captivating: he was not a great scholar, nor a very imposing man, but still I loved him.

“And it was very difficult to capture me, for I was a rough diamond. I was yet unpolished. I, at that time, already had peculiar ideas about men’s behavior, and I still remember one day my governess and myself had a long conversation about love. She said love was generally a stupid feeling, and natural to experience at some period during one’s life time; whilst I contended that it was one of the noblest, purest and most sublime sentiments man could feel. She related to me a great many cases which she quoted as illustrations for the sustenance of her theory, but in every instance I pointed out that I was right.”

“Have you ever heard of parents marrying their children to whomsoever they liked?”



“Yes, I have heard of cases!”

“Well, I think that a great wrong, because, what is marriage? It is the exhibition of true love. It is the logical conclusion, the logical deduction. Now, how can parents feel the love that lies dormant and latent in the bosoms of their children? Impossible. Ridiculous. Why, one might as well say woman should propose to man. Of course in leap years they might, but the marriageable men are generally scarce then. My governess proposed to three men in one day; the first said he was not old enough to get married; the second said he had a terrible aversion to mothers-in-law; and the third one said, almost in tears, ‘Ma won’t let me.’ Poor girl! she vowed never to propose again.”

“But,” Slippysoff now chimed in, “don’t we have a right to propose after marriage—or if we should be blessed with children, are we not allowed to propose for them?”



“Certainly!” responded Pontypoff, now growing excited, “but women do not abuse their privileges—they are the bees—the men the drones, and still, they are always subordinate and servants of men. Why, just imagine the many milliards of dollars annually squandered for the whims and fancies of men. Just look at the revenue that is annually taken in over there in the small republic of America, and that does not include illicit distilling, or stamps that are used twice—yes, tobacco and alcohol—they are the curse of the nineteenth century. Just think of the many poor women who slave from early morn to late at night, rolling cigarettes for dudes. And then, besides that, we labor for them, they expect us to eat their ice creams and *marrons glacés*. Notwithstanding that everybody is talking of co-education of women, they are seemingly not able to free themselves from this yoke.

“Yes, and what influence the men



wield; why go to balls or concerts — the men occupy all the leading positions — they are ushers, floor-walkers; why, of late, even walking delegates; they have even taken the places away from women in the household — they are cooks, waiters, butlers, and so on; soon they will be wearing looped skirts and décolleté ball dresses.

“But they act thus because they seek to rake in the shekels so that they can clothe themselves in silks and moires. Some wear black silk shirts and waistbands. And this effort to outrival the women, who are entitled to outrank them in fineries in dress, goes hand in hand with their vanity. Most of them carry mirrors with them — even the young ones, yes, and the older they get the more chronic becomes this state of morbid malady — Oh! Slippysoff, it is detestable — and how unjust to accuse us poor women of being proud——”



Pontypoff was silent for a moment, and then resumed:

“After he presented me with those oysters he sent me twice a year some little present, and though it was but a trifle, I appreciated the attention so much, it showed his noble heart. Thus the time elapsed until my sixteenth birthday; on that day he again called upon me in person, and, believe me, Slippysoff, we had a most serious talk —”

“Why serious?”

She was again seized with a fit of nervous coughing, and for some moments paused.





### CHAPTER III.

“INDEED it was serious — for he told me he loved me. And I could tell by his speech, by the earnest expression of his eyes, by the warmth of his plea, that he was sincere. True, I was sixteen, but I was not in love. I loved when I was eight, when I was nine, and when I was ten, and when I was eleven, and when I was twelve; but was I now in love? Yes; but it was not that true, deep love which he gave me. I could not reciprocate *his* love, and so the result of our serious talk was that I was forced to tell him, although it pained me to the deep--- I was compelled to say the word, I do not love you ! He became speechless, his lips livid, his eyes rolled in agony, his heart bled, but alas, what could I do? Oh, had I acted



differently it might have been different; but, oh no, it was to be !

“I felt I would be far happier if I could love, love so worthy a man, a man with the highest ideas of propriety and honor; a man who would scorn to even look improperly. Never in all those seven years did he press his lips to my face, but on that day he said: ‘Pontypoff, if you love me, kiss me.’ Oh, how I would have loved to grant him his wish, but I dared not. I always believed that marriage is an absolute result of true love, and that, therefore, the continuance of mankind is indirectly based on love. Now, why should I desecrate this doctrine; why should I disintegrate a law of humanity. Slippysoff, believe me, it was a hard task to refuse poor Tolstoy that one kiss he so eagerly yearned for. But I did smooth his ruffled feelings when I told him that if ever I learned to love him as he deserved I would from my own accord imprint my lips upon his forehead.



“We saw each other far more frequently after this occurrence—he bore the shock which my refusal had given him with heroic patience—he never wavered—never flinched from the narrow path of honor. But at times he would say: ‘Dear Pontypoff, will you ever love me?’ My answer usually was—‘I will try and learn to love you.’

“Thus passed winter after winter. He still continued courting and wooing me with the same perseverance, the same warmth, as ever—at times I doubted if I would ever love him—no, more, if I can ever give him as worthy a love, as pure a devotion, as he strenuously kept up for ten years. I doubt it to-day.”

Again she burst into bitter sobs, and for quite a time she remained unconscious to her surroundings, alone in her heart with her true lover, King Tolstoy. Slowly she began—in a sort of monsyllabic phrasing—

“Oh, why do I love him to-day, and



how is it I cannot shower that love, bestow that blessing, upon him. Oh, Slippysoff, when I left him, I said to him — ‘If you remain true to me during my absence, and I can feel for you as I do now, then I love you.’ Oh! why was it to be? Poor, broken-hearted man, how these years must have told on him; these years of devotion, of constant anguish, for his dear Pontypoff. Why was I so cruel? I have paid for it — I have paid for it.”

Pontypoff again sobbed and trembled. Her face became delicate and pale.

“Yes,” said she, suddenly, “I will finish my tale and then *you* can judge me. Shortly after those frequent visits he was called away for a short period to his brother-in-law, who was about to select a wife. Then only did I feel that I loved him a little, and it grew stronger day by day, until his absence became unendurable to me. I sent a messenger to him, under some pretext, saying that a hostile



army was approaching the city hall. His answer was:

‘If I were loved, as I desire to be,  
What is there in the great sphere of the earth,  
And range of evil between death and birth,  
That I should fear—if I were loved by *thee*.’

“Upon his return we used to have many earnest conversations—he used to explain to me what his sensations were during our separation. I listened, seemingly astonished, although I felt the same. But I would not acknowledge it to myself, and tried every means to fight down, to suppress this sentiment that was constantly coming to the fore. Only once during our entire acquaintance did he allude to a topic which made me blush. He asked me to tell him frankly whom I thought better, men or women. I said, men. And I certainly do think so still. Of course, ‘all is not gold that glitters.’ But there are really so few who are not genuine, who are counterfeit, that it is a



very difficult matter to positively decide. What do you think, Slippysoff?"

"I think women, because they are, quasi speaking, the sufferers for the sake of mankind; they sacrifice themselves for the sake of continuing the race."

"Yes, that is true — but men are nobler, they are more indulgent, more yielding — they have as a rule finer characters."

On this point a lively debate ensued 'twixt Slippysoff and Pontypoff, which they finally compromised by believing that there is no difference; men and women are equally good. Pontypoff's whole face expressed pain and still pleasure as she again took up the conversation.

"When I cast a retrospect over my entire career, I am more than ever reconciled to the idea that love is the loftiest conception, the noblest feeling that man knows of. It is a beautiful occupation to bestow love upon another, and even if it be not reciprocated. I do not believe



that lasting hatred or hostility can ever spring up between two true lovers.

“Probably you think I am again wandering from my story — not at all. I am giving you a detailed account of what led to this voyage.

“After I had completed my eighteenth year I was taken very sick with congested chills. The court physician was a regular attendant at my bedside, and very often when I expected him to write a prescription he would unroll a missive that read thus :

‘All the inner, all the outer world of pain  
True love would pierce and cleave, if *thou* wert *mine*.’

or,

‘Will you be mine forever?’

or,

‘Work without hope draws nectar in a sieve,  
And life without an object cannot live.’

“But the outside world would misjudge these *billets doux* for various reasons, because they consider the reasons for things only and the explanation, the



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reason is always more intricate than the apprehension. The world, perhaps, is too *blasé* to discern pure moral sentiments from corrupt conventional sayings; but, Slippysoff, believe, in all these letters he showed himself, as of yore, the pure, good man, prompted by noble motives. During my convalescence he called often, and we would discuss strange subjects and wander into the woods of the dim and unknown future. He was a great advocate of the emancipation of women, whilst I used to torment him by allusions to the emasculation of men. He believed that women were entitled to the same rights and privileges as men, and they could be educated to insist upon their being granted to them by a thorough course of education—learning acquired at the dissecting table and in the public courts could not be trampled upon. They would finally become an absolute necessity to mankind as co-workers and helpers in the stride of progression.

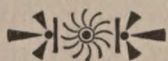


“He always said the doctrines of Darwin were incomplete. That man was created a being superior to the animal in every respect, and with the endowment of his intellect he would not only prove a boon to his inferiors, but a benefactor to all. Man can never sink to that depth, that grade which is occupied by animals.”

“But,” retorted Slippysoff, “I have heard of some villains who have committed deeds that animals would not be capable of.”

“Ah, but they possessed a sick body, and *mens sana in corpore sano*, therefore their minds were irrational, and they became irresponsible for their acts.”

Pontypoff now threw herself back and covered both her eyes with her hands as the western sky was rent by fire. It was weather-lightning.





## CHAPTER IV.

“The time will come when men  
Will be as pure and equal as the waves  
That seem to jostle and that never jar,  
                    . . . that interfuse,  
And in each other merge identity.”

“AND, now,” said Pontypoff, “comes the climax of my story. Be prepared to hear the worst, for I sinned. Oh, if it had not been for this one event I would gladly close my eyes to seek perpetual rest, but I cannot until I make restitution. I learned to love another. How I fell into his meshes, or how I could ever even have cared for him, I do not know. I never did know. He was an English officer, from a noble family, and very wealthy. Forgive me, but I cannot help but laugh to think how arrogantly he strutted about, and how vain he was about his external appearance. It was on a



summer's morn when I first met him. I had been for a walk along the beach with King Tolstoy, and we had a delightful conversation about the true inward feeling which we agreed to term love. I still can remember his face, how it radiated as he said: 'Let us conceive that all sentiment in us be blended, be joined, for intellectual, moral and spiritual *bien etre* into one band, one confederation—love.' That was his last word as he warmly shook my hand for the parting adieu. Soon thereafter this cockney came upon the scene. He accosted me, and with a thousand stereotyped apologies, excused himself for having taken the liberty. He wanted to find his way back to the Celebes Hotel. I politely showed him the way, but he seemed very reluctant to follow the direction I had shown him. He clung steadfast at my side until I arrived home. 'Au, you live hear,' he exclaimed as we reached the door. I nodded in affirmation. I bid him good



morning, and was about to turn, when I accidentally saw him pull a small memorandum book from his pocket and fixing his *monocle* in its proper attitude, he penciled something. This, of course, excited my curiosity, and I questioned him what he had written. 'You'ar sweet address, miss.' Saying this, he stared me squarely in the eye. I blushed. That encouraged him, and he asked me if I would allow him the pleasure of calling upon me. I accorded him that privilege. Oh, what a fatal mistake that was.

"Inquisitiveness is women's most deplorable vice. It leads to so many complications; but even a further meeting with this unknown would have been prevented had I not blushed. Why do women blush, Slippysoff?" She again continued, without awaiting a reply — "Blushing is an involuntary, at times unconscious, manifestation of red blood corpuscles in the lymphatics, and is generally due to shame. I was not ashamed; I



had no reason to be ashamed. ———  
——— That evening he called. I passed a detestable time, feeling annoyed at his frivolity. He left at about nine o'clock, and I hoped never to see him again. But it was my fate thus, and thus it was to be. Several times I noticed him lounging about the house. I consistently avoided his gaze. Thus, with endurance and determination, he kept up his game for months. Then I liked him better; he was decidedly good company, full of fun and tricks. From liking into passive loving, and thence into active loving.

“It was in the fall of the year, on a pleasant cool night, he bid me good bye in the hall, giving me a kiss,—much against my will. I remonstrated quite loudly, just like one would do to a person that one cares for. The king passed the door; heard the unusual noise; recognized my voice. He entered. His face bore a quiet, peaceful appearance, but the rage was boiling within him, almost



consuming him. He quietly said: 'Pontypoff, what has happened?' 'Lord Dunlo kissed me!' 'With your permission?' 'No!' Like a she-bear, when her cubs are being assaulted, he ferociously grasped him, and, with a mighty hurl, forced him into the street. He then rushed after him. I, too, crying, 'For God's sake, don't kill him!' He suddenly let his arms drop to his side, as if he had been shot into the heart. My words pained him more, though, than any gun-shot wound ever could. The coward escaped. The king remained rooted to the ground for some moments, then his eyes, in a mournful, reproachful way searched for mine. Without saying a word he walked away leaving me to myself. I have oftentimes since thought about—this matter. Why did the king interfere? Why? Oh, I cannot answer it, for the tears would suffocate my voice. Oh! inquisitiveness and blushing."

Her face assumed a different aspect



from that which it bore but a moment ago. A deathly pallor shaded her countenance—her eyes glowed like the dying embers of a wood fire.

“Oh, polar-star!” she exclaimed in a wild frenzy. “Is there no other refuge, no other atonement but death?”

“Do not grieve,” said Slippysoff, tenderly, “you are making yourself ill.”

“All my ailments are but like a drop to the ocean of pain that I caused *him*—to the one wound I inflicted upon him.”

“Has it never healed?” inquired Slippysoff.

“Oh yes, long since. Lord Dunlo paid dearly for that kiss; it cost him his life.”





## CHAPTER V.

“—— a simple child,  
That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb—  
What should it know of death?”

THE shouting of heigh-ho — heigh-ho and the pulling of halyards and braces interrupted Pontypoff in her narrating; she now went on.

“The killing of Lord Dunlo widened the chasm that lay between us. Whether it was this which preyed on *his* mind, or the fact that I no longer showed even the faintest signs of being smitten, I have never been able to find out.”

She again paused, giving vent to a quick succession of deep sighs.

“You no doubt thought that the episode with the English lord, which I have just related to you, is the climax of my story. Oh no, you are wrong. It is the



anti-climax — the turning point — the genuine climax is yet untold.”

Again a deep sigh involuntarily escaped her lips, her brow became wrinkled. Her hands were nervously outstretched, her lips twitched. She continued :

“Slippysoff, I cannot describe to you the pangs and convulsions I endured for many months. Ofttimes I would drag my care-worn frame to the beach, and there mechanically sit for hours reflecting over my past, present and future. Did I love Dunlo? Was it that love that I once so many, many years ago felt for Tolstoy? Did that love for Tolstoy exist whilst I presumably deluded myself, induced myself to love another? Or was it only a shadow, a flittering, refracted sentiment?

“From day to day I grew more melancholy, until at last my heart became enslaved, subjected to my mind — a sick mind! Could I extinguish the last spark of love that had been smoldering in my



heart for years, and which every now and then glowed and flickered? Oh, yes, love is like a flame. It is pure; cannot be contaminated or disintegrated. It shines forth in marked contrast to its surroundings. Its life is dependent on oxygen — Love is also dependent on a stimulant. Both increase when they are fanned. Both die when they are neglected. No, there is one kind of love which cannot be annihilated as long as the flame of life burns. Have I been a victim of this love?"

She answered not; but her breast heaved like the swell of stormy water. She sobbed aloud, and this quieted her emotion, like oil on the tempestuous sea.

"I felt myself drowning in the tide of *his* sincerity, and the thought of it resuscitated me. I could never love as worthily as he. Oh! love is to a dying soul the greatest stimulant; it is its greatest tonic, and of course the body receives the benefits accrued by the



heart, the soul. It prolongs and sustains life, regenerates. Love is to an injured heart like an antiseptic dressing is to a morbid wound. It shields it, it prevents pyæmia. And those that have never experienced it have never lived — I had not until then — and instead of grasping the overhanging reeds, like a drowning person would do, I pushed them from me — I vowed not to love — but, have I broken my vow? Yes, and why? Remorse, conscience pangs and heart convulsions were the factors that seduced me. *His* poor down-cast face haunted me. I could see his lips grow white, his face pale, and the dry tears on his cheek. Yes, he appeared thus to me in my dreams — I was in a continual nightmare. I knew that I had wronged him, that I had done his noble character an irreparable damage. But how could I face those eyes; they would have said, ‘Pontypoff, why did you select me, me from all mortals, as



the one to inflict so severe a punishment on ; have I deserved it ? '—No, *he* would not speak thus, but those true, steel-gray eyes would mutely appeal to my conscience. All he would say and he did say was, 'remember the ides of May ! ' ”

And in this manner, at times totally incoherent, she soliloquized.

“ Remember the ides of May ! he told me that the only time we met, and several weeks after the duel in which Lord Dunlo had been killed. The ides of May ? Why May ? Then I remembered that was the time when we had our first serious talk. It had been on the 15th of May, just ten years ago. Strange, but May was to me always an unsympathetic month, and I imagine that love declarations should be made at the most suitable times. I had oftentimes, prior to our estrangement, spoken with him on the subject of marriage. Yes, that is a grand topic, a sublime idea, a wonderful privilege. That two hearts who are destined



for each other by reason of common bonds should be allowed to cuddle each other through their entire life, should be one, is a privilege too exalted for us to understand. What can be more healing than when troubled, annoyed and irritated, to nestle in the arms of one who is rightfully entitled to hold and protect you? What is a greater blessing than to impartially share sorrow and pleasure with the one whom you love. Marriage is the holiest most sacred bond uniting two loving hearts. It is a reward for sincerity, friendship and love. It is as necessary for the continuance of mankind as light is for the reproduction of photographs. It is an essential, an indispensable blessing. Matrimony is to love as the flower is to the plant.

“I see I am annoying you with this dry dissertation, so I will wander back and complete my story. During all these years my education was going on. I was taught by one who had had a prac-

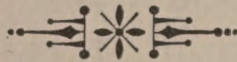


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tical insight into life as it is on the *Champs Elysées* and *Faubourg des Italiens*, or as it can be seen every afternoon on Rotten Row. She, the good, whole-souled, kind-hearted Mademoiselle Bolà-Constantino, had experienced life in every phase. In her moral instruction to me she dwelt mostly, in fact harped, on the worth of a noble heart irrespective of exterior charms, resplendent *finesse*, or great intellect. These latter were all in their place admirable attributes, but how fastidiously depraving would be the taste of him or her who would prefer them to sincerity, truth and honor. For hours she would speak about 'duty.' To use her language, 'Duty is the guide-post through life.' She often said to me: 'Pontypoff, if you should ever hesitate what road to travel; if there ever should be an uncertainty in your mind what path to tread, consult your sense of duty. It will keep you aloft! it will keep you from sinking, for duty is the esteem you feel



for yourself.' And with such strict ideas uppermost in my mind, and still confined to the very recesses of my heart, I had been nursed into womanhood. I loved everybody, knew not of enemies, feared no one but God. My ideas and knowledge of a hereafter were restricted and limited to the information I had received from her. At that time it never occurred to me to think of the day when life would cease. I never plagued myself with thoughts respecting the nature of death. I was to do right and live a noble life, pure and unselfish. It was my duty."





## CHAPTER VI.

Nel mezzo del camin di-nostra vita  
Mi ritrovia per una selva oscura  
U la diritta via  
Era smarrita."

"My poor governess, the companion of my youth, my adviser and comforter, fell a prey to the ravaging Asiatic cholera. At first nothing could console me, nothing relieve me. Then only when I stood at her bier, gazing upon the motionless face, the glassy eyes, did I realize that she was gone. And do you know, Slippysoff, even in death her face bore an expression of kindness.

"I mourned the loss — depriving myself of every contact with the world — finding solace in seclusion. And, after having resisted the first deep shock of sorrow, it gradually dawned upon me that I could best serve her memory by putting into



practice everything she had begged me to do. My sense of duty was to guide me through life. Was it not a violation of duty to live like a hermit? Yes, and therefore I decided to occasionally take little walks, to study and observe nature — life. I took these walks; but they all led me to *her*, to her last resting place.”

Pontypoff was on the point of again breaking out in sobs, but she checked herself; paused, and said, suddenly:

“ Now, I am to tell you, for I can no longer restrain myself, about the crisis, the acme, the climax of my life's story. But, before I speak of it, I will mention an episode that took place before. A foreign prince, accompanied by his daughter, paid a visit to Jusanoff Island. She was handsome and good. I had heard that King Tolstoy called several times to see her. Oh, Slippysoff, do not judge me if I tell you I became jealous. But only for a moment, and I don't know if it was the same jealousy which I had been



told about by my good preceptress. She had often explained to me the injustice done by jealous husbands or wives; she insisted that jealousy was *prima facie* evidence of love; she extolled the existence of jealousy as a feeling, in many cases, premature to devotional love, but always embodied with love; she believed that cases of established and chronic jealousy existed in individuals who were unconscious of it, and which, upon its manifestation, was as quickly suppressed as it arose. Jealousy was never at the command of one's volition, and it generally presented itself without the least cause. She propounded these theories with such confidence and certainty, that I accepted them. But, when that feeling, 'that unendurable burning,' manifested itself in me, I questioned the correctness of her arguments.

"Did I still love Tolstoy? or was I vexed or hurt because he was lavishing his true love on some one who might be



deserving of it? The Princess was handsome, good. I was taught to love everybody, with the supposition that they were good. Why should I be affected with this peculiar nauseating feeling? So argued I then, to-day I am as firm a believer in the doctrines advocated by my dear Mademoiselle Bolà-Constantino as ever. If *he* had been immaterial to me, if I had not cared for him, the green-eyed monster would not have laid its clutches upon me. Ah! jealousy is indeed a much misunderstood vice—if vice it can be called. It is certainly never prompted by bad motives or from wicked ideas. It takes deepest root in those that can love profoundly. It is a circumstantial evidence of true love. Although, Slippy-soff, what I am now going to tell you does not belong to this time, still it is very appropriate and necessary for you to know.

“Some years after this King Tolstoy and myself were engaged in discussing a



topic. To be brief it consisted of: Is jealousy a factor in married life? It was really not a discussion, for we both agreed, and that was the usual way with us. Nevertheless, the outcome of this talk resulted in creating an endorsement of the theories of my much beloved and departed mademoiselle. He claimed, and insisted, that jealousy never sprung from hatred, that with some it was deceptive; they belied themselves, imagined that they disliked or hated, and still felt jealous—in reality instead of disliking, they liked, perhaps were or were not aware of it; but they would not admit to themselves the existence of this liking. At the same time, while jealousy never sprung from hatred, hatred very often sprung from jealousy—in fact, was more of a complication than a result. And the illusion is therefore difficult to perceive, because there is, of course, *a* moment when the hatred springing from jealousy first shows itself. Now hatred, being a much stronger and more



forcible vice, is apparently taken for the mother of jealousy, whilst really it is the infant.

“ But to return to my subject, I left off at the time when I perceived the first sign of jealousy. I have never since felt that feeling. I at once banished it from my system—for it was foreign to my character. I believed then, and I still cling to that belief, that jealousy, though it may be proof of love, is an irrational and an improper symptom. That it arises from the noblest and purest souls is certain, but it is a failing which can, under aggravated circumstances, be contorted into hatred, and hatred is an evil which no human should possess. Jealousy is a blemish to a perfect character.

“ King Tolstoy certainly gave me no cause for being jealous. During almost three months, the period immediately after the killing of Lord Dunlo, we saw each other but twice. Once he called, sent up his card, and, as I refused to see



him, extended me a few words of consolation at the loss of my dear friend by letter. The second time we met, or I should rather say the first time, because the other time he did not see me, although I saw him, I could not resist. It was not curiosity or inquisitiveness, but I felt my heart yearning to get a glimpse of his proud eyes. The other time I met him on the boulevard just as he was leaving the princess' house. He told from his own accord that he had called on her, and asked me to do the same. I thanked him for his kindness, and bid him good-by. Oh! I can never forget how he looked at me; how sadly his eyes would roam from one object to another.

“Strange, but I never thought a reconciliation between us possible, and with that idea I lived.”

She now became silent, and several times, sighs, sounding like suppressed sobs, escaped her lips. After a few moments Pontypoff continued.



## CHAPTER VII.

“L’amour est un mal agréable,  
Dont mon cœur ne saurait guérir;  
Mais quand il serait guérissable,  
Il est bien plus doux d’en mourir.”

‘It was on a warm day, almost too warm to remain at home, that I decided to visit poor Mlle. Bolà’s grave. Why do I say poor? True, she has been deprived of life — the greatest blessing on earth — but has she not received more in exchange? Forgive me dear Slippysoff if I muse thus. I know it annoys you; but sometimes I can’t help it. I imagine I see her good, dear face peeping yonder out of the sky down upon me. Can’t you see it over there?’

Saying this she pointed in the direction where a great many small stars were congregated.



"Yes, dear, that is the Milky Way," replied Slippysoff.

"Oh, how beautiful that zone of blended stars is! How pure! How chaste!"

All was now still save the flapping of albatross wings and the splashing of porpoise fins. The moon was high up in the heavens throwing a streak of light on the forecastle head. In the glimmer of this darkness the form of a slight woman, walking to and fro on the deck, aft, was barely visible. It was Pontypoff. Once or twice more she paced up and down, then she resumed her seat and continued:

"Whilst I was engaged in devout prayer, kneeling on the stone step leading to *her* tomb, I heard faint and distant footsteps. As the sound grated on my ears, the thought that I was familiar with them flashed through my brain. My prayer was finished. I arose. Five minutes elapsed, and then he stood before me. In his right hand he carried a small bunch of violets. They were loose, and



the arrangement and appearance of them showed that they had been plucked by him. He handed them to me. At first I hesitated; should I accept them? I stretched out my hand to grasp them. My fingers touched his. I lifted my eyes to see him, when I for the first time noticed a deep scar on his forehead. A chill ran through me, and I almost dropped the flowers. That scar at once brought me back to the most miserable point of my life, and, although I used every effort to hide my feelings, I felt myself getting pale.

“‘Pontypoff,’ he said, at the same time handing me a beautiful scarf pin with a *Janus* head, ‘fasten those violets to your dress; they will look so prettily.’ Mutely I obeyed. I pinned them close to my neck, and I remember how I kissed those withered flowers that evening. Ever since that day violets are my favorite flowers. Slippysoff, would you believe that my entire story is virtually based



upon my acceptance of those violets? I do not remember distinctly how I felt when he offered them to me; it was so unexpected, and I was so little prepared for an attention from him. But I do remember that I was unconsciously drawn to receive whatever he said that day with favor and pleasure.

“Without saying another word he seated himself next to me, although at some distance. I labored hard with myself to open the conversation, but I could find no words to speak, knew of no topic to speak about. And, even if I had wished to speak, I doubt whether my lips could have articulated a sound. After some moments of silence, he said, ‘Pontypoff, do you remember that you once promised to be my friend? Are you—’ I did not allow him to finish the sentence. I felt the reproach. The words smarted me, and my heart hissed like a hot iron when plunged into water. I stretched out my hand, laid it into his



and said, 'I am your friend now and forever, but what care you for my friendship?' Oh, how that hurt him ; he bit his lip in pain, and earnestly begged me, implored me, never again to say that. 'If I were not seeking your friendship, if it were not necessary to the prolongation of my existence, would I have wandered to this desolate spot and disturbed you in your worship? You are the sunshine of my life, the only ray that lights my dark path! I have suffered much — I do not say so to reproach you, on the contrary, it has made me a better and nobler man ; it has made me love you better! Oh, Pontypoff, can you doubt my sincerity? If my lips were saying a falsehood, would not my eyes betray me? Oh, if you could but see my heart you would believe me, you would know that I love you intensely!' I had long felt that I loved him, but I never knew I loved him so much. We sat there for a long while, and never for a moment did he release



my hand from his manly grasp. We spoke a great deal. Hundreds of different subjects were discussed — there was *no* want of matter. And so it used to be every time we met. In fact, every time I left him I thought of several themes which I had been anxious to discuss, but which, in the heat of conversation, had been omitted. He complained of the same. Slippysoff, would you like to hear what we talked about that day?"

"Yes, it would interest me very much."

"After we had spoken of various things, I asked him, couching my question in as tender and inoffensive terms as possible, how he had received that scar? I could see what a battle took place in him, and how fiercely the warring elements raged. As an answer he pulled from a portfolio a visiting card. That was the card he had received from Lord Dunlo challenging him to a duel. According to the code that was a sufficient challenge, I understand. Seeing how re-



pulsive the allusion to this had been, I did not press him with any further queries. But he told me from his own accord how painful the wound had been, and from this the conversation drifted to doctors.

“He spoke very highly of the medical profession, terming it a noble, self sacrificing vocation, and one that brings you nearer to the goal of eternity than any other calling which could be followed. He compared them favorably, even with the interpreters of God's laws. He said the ones minister to the psychical wants, the others to physical, and as the soul cannot exist without the body in this creation, the doctor is logically, also ministering to the soul. He again quoted, ‘*Mens sana in corpore sano*’, and therefore he believed that physicists played even a more important rôle than priests. He said: ‘In this age, they have become an heroic necessity, and they practice according to the fundamental principles of nature, therefore, can do no harm.’ I



remember him saying, that there were some few that did not, and he called those quacks. The subject would not have interested me very much, had it not been for the discussion that arose when poor Mademoiselle died. The attending practitioner called it an isolated case of Asiatic cholera. I could never, and do not to-day, understand how such an epidemic, which has been a dread for ages, could attack one person, and then, so to say, be aborted in its ravage. I asked the king how that was? He explained something about a germ theory, or bacteriology, but I failed to comprehend the exact idea. He spoke very highly of antiseptics, and disinfectants, but he said, the greatest aid that a physician can receive, is the patient's implicit trust and faith, rested and placed in him. He told me of several cases where (supposed) hydrophobia had been cured, because the professors induced the patients to believe



that the dog that had bitten them was still living, and not mad.

“Whenever we had for any length of time spoken on a scientific topic he would at once go over to some subject that interested me more. He related to me about his visits to the princess, and of some of her peculiar views. One was : she believed that children’s love for their parents was deeper and better than even a mother’s love for her child, and another was that the mother’s love for a child individually decreased in exact proportion with the increase in the family and its increase in age. Well, we spoke about both those.”

Here she again paused a little, evidently gasping for breath ; she had been talking very steadily for the last half hour and now felt the effects of over-exertion.

“Oh, Slippysoff, the king has a stout heart ; his is a nature that possesses latent heat—he never chills—no, never, not if he came in contact with an iceberg



—he would infuse warmth into the coldest, and gradually elevate it close to his standard of warmth. He had reunited in him, truth, honor and sincerity. Why should I not love him? so thought I, but still notwithstanding all his admirable qualities I could not love him as I had once done many years ago. Will I ever be able to love him thus? And why cannot I?

These questions have for years given me sore trials—many sleepless nights. But to return to my story. He scorned, laughed, ridiculed the princess' ideas. He scoffed at them. No love is as true and unselfish as a mother's love, especially towards infants. She receives and can expect nothing in return but care and trouble. She nurses them day and night, even when yet so tired she sacrifices her sleep to them. Mother's love is true love. The father may love with the same intensity and fervor, but it is at all times a shade lighter.



And as for mothers loving the children less as they grow older, that, he said, is also an absurd idea. Their love remains the same, but the evidence is not so apparent, the demonstration of it is less perceptible—and so in the case where the family is increased—the mother's love for the one remains as strong, firm and true as before, but she is in duty bound to bestow it on all in the same degree, therefore, each shares with his brothers or sisters some proportion of the whole.

“We sat together talking until the sun had gone down. Dusk was fast approaching. On our way home, we again vowed each other eternal friendship, which, he said, he hoped would some day mature into love. I felt that he thought his was over-ripe, but he did not at all allude to himself. He escorted me home, and, at the door, bidding me good-night, he said: ‘Violet, be my friend!’ Yes, Tolstoy, and also I am now in need of a friend more than ever.”



Just then she looked up to see the last spark of a falling star. Pontypoff now buried her head deeply into her hands apparently engaged in prayer.





## CHAPTER VIII.

“She lay upon the dark and lonely deck,  
And sighed for sleep, for sleep that would not hear  
But left her tossing still; for night and day  
A mighty hunger yearned within her heart,  
'Till all her veins ran fever, and her cheek,  
Her long, thin hands and emaciated arms,  
Were wasted with the wasting of her soul.”

A HALF an hour had almost elapsed before Pontypoff awakened out of her dream.

“Where am I? Who is here? Oh, is it you, Slippysoff?” such were the questions that she put in a ghost-like tone to her companion.

“You have been telling me the story of your life,” replied Slippysoff.

“Ah, but I have not yet told you of the ‘Rhapsodie Hongroise’? No; then I have not yet come to the climax of my life — for that is the climax.”



“No, you left off after you and King Tolstoy had become reconciled!”

“Oh, yes; I now remember I told you about our first meeting—have you ever been separated from one you loved dearly—dearer than yourself? About a week after our meeting in the cemetery King Tolstoy called at my house and asked me to take a drive with him. He was out with his royal livery—four horses, a coachman and a footman. I accepted. We had a very delightful drive. Oh, the king was so attentive, so amiable, so kind. I was constantly getting deeper into the meshes. I could no longer restrain myself. I could not—I was in love—and what is love—love is simply the need that souls have for each other. Human love is analogous to the tendency or affinity of all elementary movement and circulation. It is a yearning, a pressing, a drawing from soul to soul—heart to heart.

“Yes, Slippysoff, love is but a link of



life ; the firmer and closer these links are riveted together, just so much happier will life be. Life is but a fragment without love. With reciprocated love it becomes the life — the life which has been sung about by all poets.”

“ You are right! ” suddenly interrupted Slippysoff, “ but still we require a belief, faith, before we can become happy! ”

“ The only hope that will at times stimulate us in our desire to live, is the hope of again living in some brighter planet. ”

“ Pontypoff, I have listened to you attentively. I agree with you on a great many subjects, but I believe there are unhappy marriages based on true love. ”

“ No, dear, it is a misconception. If a marriage is contracted by two who feel that there is no bond on earth so sacred, so tender, so holy, and so sublime, then their hearts and souls fit like gear wheels. And the reason therefor is because both are extremely happy; it is the same hap-



piness produced by the same thoughts. Think, Slippysoff, if the whole world were to slander, scorn, and detest you, if all the rest but one were to hound you, and that one would cling to you, would never wrong you in word or in deed, would share with you pleasure and sorrow, poverty and riches, would yield and sacrifice everything for your sake, then you could not help but bestow your true, sincere, unselfish love in return upon him; you would press his head to your breast, caress and kiss him, you could never bear the idea of being separated from him except by the inevitable death, you would always have a smile, and a laugh, and a kiss for him; you would dry his tears if he had any, in fact, you would sacrifice your all for him just as he has sacrificed his for you. You would be happy."

"But, does that ever happen? Can human beings be so happy?"

"Yes; that is the love which God



showers upon his subjects. It is similar to the love for your fellow man or woman, to the love for your friend, the love for your parents; it is similar to the love for *him*. The similarity between is great; they are all alike except in the direction in which they are spent—the intensity and fervor remains the same. If I had ever loved my parents, I would have loved *him* with the same fervor and sincerity as he loved me; but I had never loved before, neither friend nor fellow-being, nor mother nor father.”

Again she paused, then continued:

“Odd, but my mind is always at a standstill when my body is in motion; so it was that day when I was driving out. And whenever he would want to draw me out on some topic I would hardly give an intelligible monosyllabic answer. We spoke that day a great deal of the *future*, and he would again and more seriously have pressed his suit and asked me for my hand and heart had it not



been for this apparent distant retiredness, due to the influence of locomotion on my brain. I said a few words in a satirical tone about the perfection of men. From that he launched out into a discussion between the relative merits of man and woman. This was a very interesting debate, and threw us into great merriment. I advocated that man was not only to be the support, but also the educator and nurse. Well, he said he was willing to play nurse, but he would object to wearing lace caps. The afternoon passed very quickly. Oh, how intensely I was falling in love with him, and still I could not have been his wife.

“ In speaking about men and women, we spoke of what led mostly to quarrels, and who was generally responsible. We did not agree, and for the first time in our entire acquaintance. He accused women of being inquisitive and over sensitive. I did not so much defend women as attack the men. I said men had devils’



tempers; had unaccountable humors, followed by irritability; and that, worst of all, they were easily contaminated, seduced to the bad, and were adepts in the cultivation and industry of accumulating yeast to the brewer. As I said before, we had a very enjoyable afternoon, and I felt very sorry when he left.

“When I was alone in my room, my heart beat very loud, and I felt sick. Oh, heart disease is an awful complaint. Why did he not bring me a flower? Has his love decreased? Is it perpetual love? Can I risk? Such were the questions which I, one by one, disposed of satisfactorily, and still I could and would not consent to be his wife.

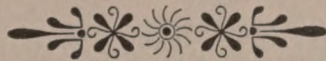
“Slippysoff, has the climax of my life been told to you? No, but I will soon be far enough advanced to say it. Oh, there is a great deal of darkness in that cloud rising yonder; just so with my life's story, before the storm — before the climax.



“Just before he left the carriage, he told me that his brother-in-law, a widower, would be publicly married to Princess Dudidoff. This news did not at all astonish me, for I had heard that she came to Jusanoff Island because she was already in love with the king's brother-in-law.

“Oh, Slippysoff!” she cried out, in great alarm, “look at that cloud—it is a hurricane, a cyclone cloud.”

The next moment the cry was heard, “All hands about ship! All canvas in—” then the unwilling reply — “Bye-bye, miss.”





## CHAPTER IX.

“Something the heart must have to cherish,  
Must love and joy and sorrow learn,  
Something with passion clasp or perish,  
And in itself to ashes burn.”

“THAT dark cloud of sorrow” was lowering; it had almost touched the water’s edge. Suddenly it was as light as day, then night — then a shot was heard like the detonation of nitro-glycerine. On the deck still sat Pontypoff with her head deeply buried in her knees — the air was charged with electricity — the moon was covered ———.

A fay-like voice almost inaudibly muttered:

“We’ll stand the storm,  
It won’t be long,  
We’ll anchor by and by.”

Presently the cry of “All is well” is heard, and the sky is again clearer — the



moon is now perceptible — the poop is again the scene of action, the coiling of ropes, the squirming of the cable going about the capstan. Then sounds the cry of “Belay!” — capstan bars are noiselessly put away. The crowd is once more reduced to two.

Unstained by sincur—  
She is too pure to stay  
'Midst the world's noise and din;  
She'll soon pass away.

Pontypoff slowly raised her countenance which had undergone a remarkable transformation — her face was colorless; her lips blue; her teeth dark; in fact she looked, for the moment, hideous. As quick as a flash she was again transformed — her eyes possessed luster and brightness, her mouth was round and moist, as she said to Slippysoff—

“How many fathoms are we drawing?  
Are we any nearer the coast?”

“The wind is right on our bow, we



are steering Nor-nor-east; five points off our course."

"Oh! by to-morrow night I will be safe and well in the harbor of Jusanoff—in the arms of the king. Oh no, how can I? Does he still love as fervently, as sincerely, as he did fifteen years ago? Is my love worthy of his? Even were it not, I have his promise. How many years since I last was in these waters? Is it not almost five years? Oh, no, Pontypoff, why it is not a month; soon the snow will cover the ground, cover the graves. Oh my poor Mlle. Bolà—how many winters have you rested whilst I have suffered? Little did we think that I should ever bewail my misery, but there are some sufferings too heavy for the heart to bear alone. Alone. Alone, did I say, ah, yes, alone—through my own choice, and if I had happened to empty my heart into another, into a warm receptacle, it might have frozen its benefactor; it might have been suddenly thrown back on its



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warm bedding, and I would have discovered that I had been jilted."

In this manner she raved, occasionally crying aloud for several minutes, then she would gradually tone down until she became totally mute. Now she resumed:

"And now I am to tell you about the climax of my life. Strange, isn't it? Strange that a climax, be it of whatever it may, is always nearer the end than the beginning. But my climax was due to a particularly peculiar feature—it would not have happened, and I dare say other things would not have happened, if it had not been for one distressing episode. The day before the final wedding festivities of the king's brother-in-law, a small fishing smack ran ashore on the west coast of the little island. This was an extremely treacherous place, and the occupant of the boat, not knowing this, stepped on to the ground to push the boat off the land. As soon as his foot rested upon *terra firma* he disappeared, and



was never heard of since. Oh, the watery grave. And, still, why should we have a repugnance to being buried at sea? True, there are no tombstones, no perennial plants — there are sharks. I, for myself, do not care. The king wishes to be interred next to me. Next to me? And if I should perish at sea, how could it be done? Oh! that will not happen; we are only twenty-four hours from land. Why, the Polner mountain, even in the darkness, is perceptible with the naked eye.





## CHAPTER X.

“O, tell her brief is life, but love is long,  
There's somewhat flows to us in life  
But more is taken quite away,  
And tell her, tell her what I tell to thee.”

“It was a beautiful July morning,” now continued Pontypoff. “The king's brother-in-law was to be married, and they were to give a garden party. Everything looked serene and bright; the town hall and large shops were decorated, flags were flying in all direction in honor of him and her. Merriment, pleasure and enjoyment was floating in the air; the door of one little house was also decorated. Yesterday the father, the husband and the boy had gone to sea—gone to sea. Three species of love were at once carried away—the love of a father, wife and child—oh, how terrible. Is he who has



never had occasion to love not happier than he who has loved with sorrow? Now listen, Slippysoff, to the end, for the climax is at hand.

“At seven o'clock the king called for me. I was awaiting him, and without detaining him for one moment we left. He was exceedingly pleasant; a large bouquet of hot-house violets was worn by me as corsage; a like button-hole bouquet ornamented him. He was exceedingly attentive—nothing could escape his eyes—he constantly fanned me, at the same time pouring sweet words of love into my ears. The ceremony was over—supper was served—I ate very heartily. While the king was sipping his *café au lait*, a large *bonbonniere* filled with *marrons glacés*, was presented to me with *his* card. On the blank side was the following writing:

‘I have been wild and wayward, but you’ll forgive me now.

‘Your own,

‘TOLSTOY, REX.’



“Of course we laughed about the joke, and the poor application and misappropriation of Tennyson’s beautiful verse. It was now a few minutes of nine o’clock. The lanterns, some of which consisted of gorgeous colors and shapes, were being hung up. The king and myself were all alone. Clothed in the most beautiful language, and with such earnest sincerity, he asked for my hand and heart. I was wavering, and if I had said yes, I would not have been able to keep it; rather death than dishonor, rather moral death, rather a perjurer, than to marry a man one does not love. I asked him to allow me a few moments’ time. He implored for a favorable answer; he loved me — oh, I knew it — he still loves me; but how could I, when I was not worthy of him. The concert was to start at nine o’clock, the programmes were just being handed around.

“The first and second pieces were very pretty potpourris out of leading comic



operas, the third was a march. Oh! if I had only then marched out! I might to-day have been saved. Oh, Slippysoff, I loved him dearly, just like on that day twenty years ago; oh, I love him now—but is it not too late? Yes, the third piece had been played. The fourth was announced on the programme as ‘King Tolstoy’s Symphony,’ a dedication played by the composer, Traconi. Several moments elapsed. ‘Traconi?’ I said to him—‘Why that is the man who was drowned!’ ‘You are right, Violet! But what can we do? Can’t you play something?’ ‘No, dear,’ I said to him; ‘I have not played a note, not even opened the piano since my good *Mademoiselle’s* demise.’ Everybody is still waiting—suddenly he arose, straightened his neck-tie and away on to the stage.

“Oh, Slippysoff, you have no idea what applause greeted him. He walked up to the small platform, bowed, and then informed them of the sad accident that



had befallen the composer of 'King Tolstoy's Symphony,' and said that he regretted not being able to hear it played by its master's hand. He then coughed, and went on saying, 'with the forbearance and indulgence of the audience I will attempt to play it.' Oh, believe me, Slippysoff, I was just on the point of saying in deference, in respect to the departed, the festivities should be adjourned *sine die*. And why did I not? If I had, what happened would not have happened. But I did not, because I loved to hear *him* play. Oh, how it pleased me that he had the courage, for although he was a fine player, he was only an amateur. But I had not heard him since several years, and I, therefore, was doubly anxious to hear him perform. Whilst all these thoughts were entering in and out of my brain he had mounted the stage and was looking for the scores—the notes. After several moments of conscientious searching he excused himself,



saying that he had another disappointment in store for the audience, as he could not find the music.

“I again could hardly restrain myself from saying: ‘Then I move that he play something else.’ But I did not. Why I did not, I don’t know; I did not then. He had already made a short bow, ready to leave the stage, when another idea took hold of him. The audience had shown their marked dissatisfaction in applauding, in calling *Bravo, Bis Encore*. A general riot ensued. But it was rapidly quelched, and without the aid of police intervention, although the disturbers of the peace had been spotted by him. He may have suspected me, for he looked long in the direction where I was sitting. Without saying a word he seated himself in his easy, natural and becoming style on a piano stool that had long been idle, and with an artistic touch and masterly execution played what sounded to be an easy but which in reality was a diffi-



cult piece. It was the *Rhapsodie Hongroise*, by Franz Liszt. Have you ever heard it, Slippysoff?"

"No."

"Oh, it is a most beautiful theme, and how he played it. He lived with the composer. Liszt himself could not have played it with more feeling, more earnestness. It starts off with a *lento a capriccio*. This, at once, initiates one into the secret passion—he betrays his intention. Then comes that majestic, towering *Lass an*. Oh, the tempo is the *andante*—it is the wavering, and still determined *andante cum molto espressione*. Oh! it has a wonderful impression on a susceptible soul—it imbues it with affection—it stirs it into action—it elevates and ennobles it. Ah! and those runs, those soft, graceful, florid runs, executed with expression and sentiment. It rises and falls, first like the rushing of a waterfall, then diminishes to the distant fall of a geyser, always growing fainter, now and



then with a *fff*. Ah! what is music? It is the very speaking of the soul, imbued with life; it quivers, it trembles, then comes another *tempo*, the *friska*, a lively, regular, and low *vivace*, gradually growing quicker, little by little; it is life — life of the soul. Then the *giusto vivace*. Oh! that is marvelous, exquisite. Those who have heard can never forget its gladdening effect; it has no reflex action, cannot call forth retroflection; its *scherzando* and *leggierissimo* is pleasing, highly gratifying; it does not inveigle thoughts of past agonies into one's heart, it does not remind of pain, care, and trouble; it is leger, frivolous, budding; now we hear the *più mosso*, it increases in speed; its tone becomes still richer, more abundant — it is still rising in intensity it wanders up the scale, it reaches the D——. The *stringendo con strepito* is the coil that is winding into a knot, and so it continues; from the *tutta forza* it descends, diminishes — now the



mellifluous *staccato*, and toward the close of the tempo the *cadenzas* — oh, his execution was artistic; they are to be played *ad libitum*, and how he played them. The tempo is closed. The last is the *poco meno mosso e marcato*; it has but a short, active life; it abounds in harmony; it creates enthusiasm. Everybody is on his feet; their ears are dilated so that the *auditorius meatus externus* acts like the receiver of a telephone; it catches every iota of sound. The sound waves no longer vibrate singly; they are intermingled — flowing, rolling without meeting obstruction — the vibrations are increased; the *rapido prestissimo* is now only a *prestissimo*; the music is ravishing, it grows fainter and weaker; a few more measures, a few notes, no final accord, it is over; the sound waves are still traveling, but the tide has changed — it is now flowing in — stamping of the feet, clapping of the hands, *bravissimos* and *da capos* rent the air.



“ Oh, music has a striking effect upon heart and soul. The grandeur of harmony cannot be encompassed—it revolts, struggles. Slippysoff, I have often thought over the effect music has upon me. But no piece has ever made one-tenth the impression upon me than his rendering of the ‘ Rhapsodie Hongroise.’ I fairly swooned; I fainted. I knew not whether I was standing or sitting. I felt the music in me. Oh, it was like imbibing *ambrosius* and *nectar*.

“ Music is like love; it resembles love in all its characteristics. First, the acquaintance, the *lento a capriccio*; then the friendship, the *andante*; getting closer befriended, more intimate, the *andante molto espressivo*; first love declaration, the fiery passion, the *vivace*; a rebuke, the *giusto vivace*; love will out, it cannot be extirpated, it exists, the *più mosso*; it must subject, subdue, it increases in force, vigor, the *tutta forza*; then the triumph, victory, the *staccato*;



happiness and devotion, ease and peace, the *cadenza ad libitum*.

“Oh, will my love end thus? I doubt it. It may be too late. On some, music acts as intoxicant; on some, like sad news; but it imbues me to nobler ideas, purer motives. Under its tender stimulus I can endure hard ordeals. There are certain vague theories afloat regarding the transmigration of the auditor's soul into the same sphere and era as that of the composer; these theories are mostly negative and illogical. Society yields, year in, year out, some musical maniacs, but the supposition is fairly tenable that they were moonstruck or a little tainted in mind before the influence was brought to bear upon them. What effect has music upon you?” asked Pontypoff.

Slippysoff had closed her eyes; she now quickly opened them as she replied:

“It irritates me, transmutes me into a different subject; but I still enjoy it. I love it; but I find it indigestible, it does



not agree with me, especially if I indulge too freely."

"That is very strange. But to return to my story; I was completely overawed, specially by his wonderful betrayal of innate talent—oh, yes, where there is warmth and passion, there must be fire, and fire burns. His playing was the smoke—the evidence of fire—it warmed me! There were several very pretty things played after *his*. One was the slumber song from the opera, *La muetta di Portici*—oh, that is so pretty—it is not grand or august, it is rather *petite*, but it actually makes one yawn and feel sleepy. Of course I do not contend that the composer, when he wrote that, felt in a sleepy mood, or that his soul felt sleep. Not at all, it is a creation of the mind; the composer intended to write a song that would have the effect of putting the listeners to sleep.

"Yes, the intonation and the *markato* of the slumber song were splendid, but



he played to an empty house, for even if some of the benches were occupied they were empty for him, because they did not listen; they were loudly talking and arguing about the grandeur of the king's play. The last piece was a selection from *Il Trovatore*. The closing duo *In nostri monti*, etc., sung by Asuzena and the duke. Of course, here again the music is lovely, and it all lies in the arrangement of force and time. But the tempo is in music what rhyme is in poetry, the time is like the rhyme.

"He returned to me as unimposing and insignificantly as when he left, and still he had met with unprecedented success at his debut. He had received several tokens of appreciation, among them being a beautiful bouquet of *Maréchal Niel* roses from the new sister-in-law of the king. He, himself, saw no one but me. All this success only tended to increase his ardor. He again implored me for an answer. I was still in the delirium



of the *Rhapsodie*. I stuttered, I stammered — at last I could induce my vocal chords to vibrate a nervous tremor. I said:

“ ‘Tolstoy, I can never be your wife, for I am not worthy of your affection. I can love, can love truly, but your love needs the reciprocation of a desperate love, a love beyond even the taint, even the breath of an insinuation against a failing. I can not be otherwise but your friend forever and ever. I love you, love you to distraction. You would make me the happiest of mortals on earth.’ That was the last word I said. I still remember it. The king did not answer. His face did not change color. He stood motionless, speechless.”





## CHAPTER XI.

“I love thee to the depth, and breadth, and height,  
My soul can reach. How do I love thee?  
I love thee with a love, I seemed to lose  
With my lost saints. I love thee with the breath,  
Smiles, tears, of all my life — and if God choose  
I shall but love thee better after death.”

“YOU have heard about the crisis of my life. I refused his wooing — *alea jacta est*. Will I pass this rubicon, or will I meet him yonder, whence that star is so mischievously winking at me. Ah! you rogue! I do not want to join hands with you, you are in league with the man with the cloven foot. Ha! ha! once more the sun will set, and then we will be riding anchor in the harbor of Jusan-off. But it often happens that when we offer our hearts to others, or if we make some heroic sacrifice, and stoically bear the pain — we are filled with disgust, not only for the individual, but for the whole



world. We are misunderstood, our efforts are not appreciated.

“ Was not the king sacrificing himself? May be he considers me prudish! Is there an unconscious estrangement between us? Oh, no; why I shall be hanging on his neck to-morrow. But I am again straying from my story. I remember telling you the answer I gave him to his proposal. It seems I fainted then and was taken home, or, whether I was resuscitated before being taken home I do not know, for I was unconscious. The following morning I had a very severe headache, and pains along my spine. Perhaps I injured myself in falling! I was not determined what to do, as I did not know whether the king and I would be enemies for life, or what would take place. Oh, that was a miserable, uncertain day. Toward evening I rose and sat in an easy chair at the window. Who should pass on horseback but the king. At first I did not recognize



him, he stared at me as if he thought I did not catch his eye. I bowed, he saluted. I made a motion, he answered, he came.

“The first word he said was:

“ ‘Violet, my love, are you rested; did you pass a good night?’ I told him about my headache, and that I feared I had fallen. He smiled, and informed me that I had fallen into strong arms. I disliked the idea of him holding me while I was unconscious, as long as he dared not hold me now. He again argued and re-argued the case, but in vain. He assured me that I overrated him, that he was no genius, that thousands could play better than he. Better, yes; but not with so much sympathy, so much sentiment. If I married him, it would be for his heart’s sake, not for the agility of his fingers.

“His parting was: ‘Well then, Violet, my child, be my sincere friend. Some day you will learn to love me.’ I answered not. As the door closed on its



hinges behind him, I felt a peculiar, tingling sensation between my shoulder blades. I did not consider it anything serious, therefore did not take any unusual precautions to prevent its further spreading, if it were a disease. I retired earlier.

“It is still so clearly before my mind as if it had happened yesterday. As indistinct and dull as recollections of dreams generally are, this one, which I dreamt that night, I can relate to you as truthfully and as vividly as when it happened.”

“Oh! Pontypoff, I am so fond of telling the meaning of dreams, do tell me that one, and I will tell you what is to befall you.”

Pontypoff merely shrugged her shoulders. Her lips were mute, her eyes glowed with that demon-like flare, and her lips became purple as she incoherently stammered, raising the forefinger of her right hand as high as she could:

“Yon— yon— er —star is my guide, I



follow it wherever it goeth, and, when it disappears from the horizon, then also my time is fast drawing to an end."

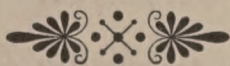
"Pontypoff, for God's sake, do not become delirious; brace up."

A nervous tremor now shook her system. Her head was quickly snapped backward. Her tongue extended far out of her mouth. Slippysoff sat mutely watching her in her paroxysms of *locomotor ataxia*. After some time her features returned to their normal condition. Her tongue was again drawn in. The muscles of the neck relaxed.

"Yes, Slippysoff, I will tell you my dream. I was in a foreign land, where the trees were hung with golden fruits, the rivers lined with silvery banks. No friend or acquaintance was at my side. I was suddenly stricken with paralysis. My limbs were lifeless, my senses in a coma. All the native herb doctors were unable to improve my condition. I lay for days, for nights, waiting for death to



relieve me. Circulation in me had almost stopped, respiration was stertorous, and only my heart's beat broke the rythm of monotony, as I was approaching the last stage of dissolution. I had an omen, a foreboding —. He could save me. Oh! why don't you come? my lips articulated without producing a sound. Do, oh, do, save me. Then I remained unconscious for some time until a terrific noise, coupled with blows and struggling, awoke me. It was *he*. He had come to save me. With his kind nursing and tender care I soon reconvalesced. That is the dream." Slippysoff stared wonderingly into her blanched face, and remarked: "Remember the ides of May!"





## CHAPTER XII.

“ Aux bords d'im lat d'azur, il est une colline  
Dont le front verdoyant légèrement s'incline  
Pour contempler les eaux;  
Le regard du soleil tout le jour la caresse  
Et l'haleine de l'onde y fait flotter sans cesse  
Les ombres des rameaux.”

THE moon was fast vanishing from sight, the stars were no longer visible, everything looked serene and calm except the apparently lifeless form of Pontypoff still reclining in her chair. Before her kneeled a full, well-developed figure, with raven-black hair hanging loosely upon her shoulders, and black eyes full of expression. She now bent over her as if she were giving her the last sacrament.

Pontypoff whispered into her ear: “ I feel so cold, so lonesome. Do not leave me, for I have yet to tell you the most important part of my life's story, its finale.



The king paid me repeated calls, and each and every time declared his never ceasing love. I loved him, it is true. I worshiped him. I lived only in his presence. In his absence I was like dying. He constantly urged me to at least promise him my heart, if I could not give him my hand. And why did I not do so? Oh! that Janus head was my talisman, it was a fatal talisman. His last long visit was on a cold, wintry night. The earth was covered with snow, and he called with his sleigh to take me out riding. I would have longed to go, I would have loved to be near him but I felt too weak that night. I feared that I might yield to his constant appeals; that my heart would seek repose from the gnawing which it had endured for many, many years. I consider that evening as important, Slippysoff, as the one on which he so exquisitely played the rhapsody. And why? Because it was the first, and the last, and the only time, that



I emptied my heart from all the refuse that had been accumulating in it since my poor, poor mademoiselle had left me. Oh! how soon will I see her again? Will I ever hear her speak to me words of advice and friendship? Will I ever hear her admonish me to do right? Will I ever hear her say those words: 'Pontypoff, duty above all! Pontypoff, duty is the guide-post through life!' How many weary evenings have I spent trying to find out where the path of duty led me. And I have studiously tried to tread, in humble strides, that narrow path frequented by so few. But why moralize with you, Slippysoff; you are so pure, so good, as clear as the sky above, as pure as the water below. For you there is salvation, for me — none! But I am again wandering from my subject. I must continue.

"I will repeat to you, as near as memory serves me, what I said to him: 'Tolstoy, I loved you when I was eight years



old. I loved you then with a pure, untrammelled child love, until my sixteenth year. If you had then come to me and said, "Pontypoff, love me as you have done for five years longer, and then be my wife," I would have said, "Yes, dear;" but, after eighteen years of truant love, and the onus of the taking of a man's life upon my shoulders, after that, I could never unite myself with any man. But I will make an exception with you. If you can love me as passionately, as earnestly, as sincerely after my absence of five years, if you have not in the meantime found another whom you love better, then I will agree to be your wife.'

"A strange sight then confronted me. A large tear, like a dew-drop, rolled down his cheek. I have ever since that day asked myself, was it evidence of joy or disappointment?

"Days passed, months passed, finally a year passed. Everything continued in the same monotony as it had heretofore.



The only event of great importance was the arrival of an heir to the king's sister-in-law. Of course there was great rejoicing in that household, and there always is when a blessing is received from God's hand. Yes, children are a blessing. They are innocent and naive, unacquainted with the ways of the wicked world. They are the milk and honey of life. There were slight changes in the royal household. The master of the hounds had died and was succeeded by his son. The court physician was killed in a duel. Yes, that was another very interesting episode. It occurred in this manner: The king was suddenly taken ill, and I might as well tell you now that poor Tolstoy had aged very quickly in the last few years. Furrows and wrinkles covered his forehead. The young orphan girl in the service of the lady of the linens was desperately in love with the assistant court surgeon. As the illness of the king came within the scope of the



house surgeon, and he was rightfully entitled to the call, the head court physician surreptitiously inveigled the young orphan girl to deliver him the message, and thus gained the favor of the king. This base act irritated the young court physician to such an extent that he challenged his once benefactor and former preceptor to a duel, in which he slew him."

Again a severe attack was felt by her, her eyes rolled wildly, until the pupil was no longer visible. Her emaciated limbs were stretched out like a jury rudder. She was almost in the throes of death. But she lingered—her thoughts were with him. Why did she not love him? Once more she sat up in her chair, holding herself tightly on the binnacle. It was now dawn. Gradually it became lighter. In the wake of the ship, swerving from side to side, making use of the leeway, swam a black shark.

"Slippysoff," she said, once more, "shortly before I left he came to me, so



proud and so happy, saying, 'Pontypoff, for your sake I have learnt swimming, shooting and rowing; you will never need to fear when under my protection; and, dearest Pontypoff,' he continued, 'I have also sent for one of the greatest musicians of Europe—a genius—the conductor of the Court Theater at Karlsruhe. He has instructed me in harmony and composition. He, himself, is a very clever player, and he composed several original dances, which have been introduced at court; the king kept up with all the rapid advances made in science and in the professions. He abolished capital punishment; inaugurated a new system of delivering mail; helped organize, and was elected president pro tem. of, the S. P. C. C. A.; appointed a man by the name of Tom Stock, who had at one time lived in the United States, as censor of the proper standard of morality to be used in all works of art and literature.

"I myself never got over that head-



ache that I contracted." In saying this she again limped about in a rather incoherent manner. She was now in the last stages of dissolution — suffering from *locomotor ataxia*.

"But, to continue my story; the king wooed me year after year, his love always became stronger, warmer, until at last my physician recommended me to a cooler climate.

"Before leaving, the king and myself had a long, serious talk, and after his most desperate appeals, I acceded to his request to marry him on my return home. I have been abroad for several years, visited all the prominent faith curists, but alas, there seems no cure. Oh, if I were but to tell you of the dear friends that I made whilst abroad!"

She again paused, and sobbed.

"Slippysoff, this is like a dying statement, and if I should not reach port — ah, but we are only eighty knots from shore — yes, if I should not see him alive, tell



him of some of my experiences abroad, especially of the dear friends I left behind me. Oh! I never knew what it was to bathe in the embrace, to lie on the heaving bosom of a dear, good friend. One—yes, the memory of one I will take with me yonder, for she was a nobility in character, her soul as pure as transmitted light, her heart ever beating for one in distress. Poor girl! how she suffered to see me go; she feared it would be the last meeting. Yes, good Jules Renck! Oh, her eyes will ne'er meet mine again; and there is one other, and if the king can console himself to the thought of losing me, if he could bestow his love on her, she would be worthier of it than I; she is as true as Damascus steel; oh, tell *him*, dear Slippysoff, that she loves him because he loved me so dearly—she promised to write to him and tell him to treat her nicely. Her name is Adolphine Volkhardt—oh she is worthy of the worthiest.”



Again the paroxysms of *locomotor ataxia* attacked her. Would death not be a welcome relief? No; for she longed to see him once more. She yearned to look upon the Polner, to gaze upon the beautiful white sand, to fondle those little urchins who had been the sunshine of her declining years.

Death was fast approaching. Again she spoke: "We shall soon *all* be happy." Her breathing was already difficult; her chin quivered; her hands trembled; suddenly with terrific force she made another effort to rise, but it was in vain. Her head sunk until it was deeply buried in her knees. She tried to speak; her mouth mechanically opened and closed. "It is growing dark" were the only and last words spoken by her. The *rigor mortis* had set in. She was growing cold.

Several days later a vessel, entirely manned by women, sailed into the harbor of Jusanoff. Part of their cargo con-



sisted of the last remains of a once beautiful woman—Pontypoff. Even in death her face betrayed that mysterious and inexplicable look which had accompanied her through life.

King Tolstoy's health had also been failing for some time, he was no longer the hero of romance, the combatant in the struggle of life. He was a sufferer. The sad news was the final blow, the necessary means of destroying him. Paresis developed into mania, and while in a fit of raging madness he succumbed.

Love will out.

“Mortals, they softly say,  
Peace to thy heart!  
We, too, yes mortal,  
Have been as thou art.”

FINIS.











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